LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

1.   (Previously Presented) An apparatus for identifying a requested level of service for a transaction, comprising:

non-transitory computer readable storage media; and

computer readable program code stored in said storage media, comprising:

a)   program code for prompting a user to select a requested level of service for said transaction;

b)   program code for assigning said requested level of service to said transaction;

c)   program code for selecting a backup level of service; and

d)   program code for assigning said backup level of service to said transaction when said requested level of service is unavailable, wherein said transaction is directed to a network device that is best able to provide said requested level of service for processing said transaction, wherein said best able to provide is determined by program code of a load balancer as to what is a nearest level of service to said requested level of service.

2.   (Original) An apparatus, as in claim 1, wherein said transaction is a packetized signal comprising at least a data packet, and wherein a service tag is associated with said data packet by said program code for assigning said requested level of service, said service tag including said requested level of service.

3.   (Cancelled)

4.   (Original) An apparatus, as in claim 1, wherein said requested level of service is a

predefined service category.

5. -8.   (Cancelled)

9.   (Previously Presented) A method for requesting a level of service for a transaction on a

network, comprising:

        selecting said requested level of service for said transaction via a user interface; and

        assigning said requested level of service to said transaction;

        selecting a backup level of service; and

        assigning said backup level of service to said transaction when said requested level of

service is unavailable, wherein said transaction is directed to a network device that is best able to

provide said requested level of service for processing said transaction, wherein said best able to

provide is determined by program code of a load balancer as to what is a nearest level of service

to said requested level of service.

10.-13. (Cancelled)

14.   (Previously Presented) An apparatus for routing a transaction over a network based on a

requested level of service associated with said transaction, comprising:

        a number of non-transitory computer readable storage media; and

        computer readable program code stored in said number of storage media, comprising:

   a)   program code for selecting said requested level of service for said transaction;

b)   program code for assigning a service tag to said transaction, said service tag

including said requested level of service, and said program code assigning parts of said

service tag at more than one point on said network;

c)   program code for reading said requested level of service from said service tag;

d)   program code for directing said transaction over said network based on said

requested level of service read from said service tag;

e)   program code for selecting a backup level of service; and

f)   program code for assigning said backup level of service to said transaction;

wherein said transaction is directed to a network device that is best able to provide said

requested level of service for processing said transaction, wherein said best able to provide

is determined by program code of a load balance as to what is a nearest level of service to

said requested level of service.

15.   (Original) An apparatus, as in claim 14, wherein said transaction is directed over said

network to a device best providing said requested level of service.

16.   (Cancelled)

17.   (Original) An apparatus, as in claim 14, wherein said service tag is read by program code

at more than one point on said network.

18.   (Original) An apparatus, as in claim 14, further comprising program code for changing

said requested level of service included on said service tag.

19.   (Cancelled)

20.   (Cancelled)